

Kazimir S. Malevich, “Victory Over the Sun,” portfolio.

Creator of one of the most recognizable pieces of modern art, Kazimir Malevich rose from humble circumstances in the villages of the Ukrainian countryside to form Russia's first influential avant-garde movement.

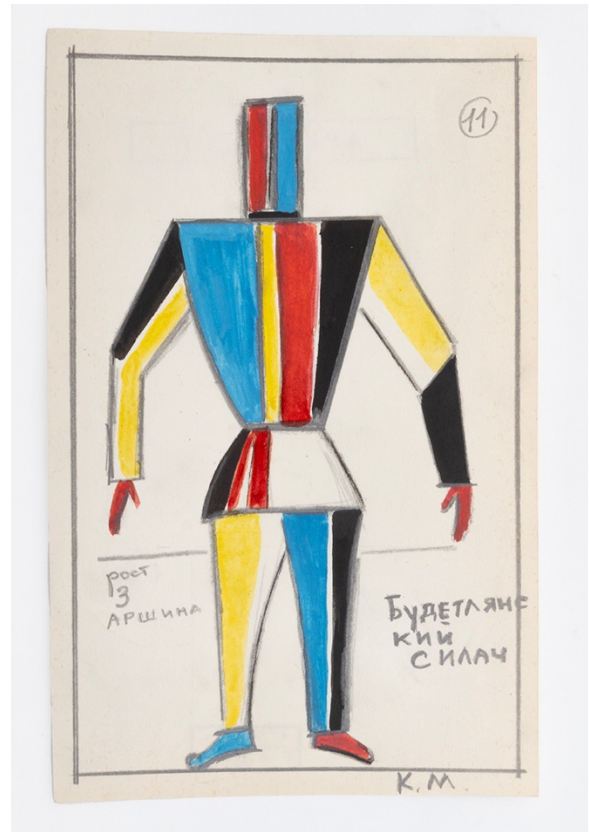
Michaan's Auctions was proud to offer **Kazimir S. Malevich, “Victory Over the Sun,” portfolio** which sold for \$12,300 in our Summer Fine Sale, held on Monday, June 17th.



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This lot included eleven drawings of a portfolio that originally comprised twenty-three works. Each drawing features a costume designed for the Futurist opera “Victory over the Sun.” Originating in 1913, these drawings offer an early rendition of the unique forms of abstraction that would come to define Russian, and later Soviet, art over the coming years. Featuring distinct, clearly rendered forms made of straight lines, sharp angles, and portions of a circle’s arc, a rough figure emerges from each drawing. These renderings are completed with bright, ungraduated colors, with the limited shading exclusively in grayscale. Each figure is placed upon an empty white field and enclosed within a rectangular box. The drawings are numbered in the right corner, while Russian titles are placed on the right side, with the artist’s initials located at the lower right.



The year 1913 was pivotal in the career of Malevich, marking the culmination of his time as a Cubo-Futurist. It was during his time serving as the stage designer for “Victory over the Sun” opera, a highly contentious production written in a constructed language, that Malevich made his first Black Square. The Black Square, which sold for over \$85 million to a coalition of prominent museums including MoMA,

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Tate Modern, and the Guggenheim Museum, is one of the defining and most recognizable works of modern art. It marks the beginning of the Supremacist movement and the debut of Russia as a thriving avant-garde community.

Kazimir Severinovich Malevich was born in the winter of 1879 in Kyiv, modern-day Ukraine. Son of Polish immigrants, his father was a manager of a regional sugar factory, which led the family to live in various villages throughout Ukraine to supervise its sugar beet plantations. Malevich showed an early interest and returned to study drawing in Kyiv after turning eighteen. After aligning himself with the Impressionist movement, he moved to Moscow in search of a more cosmopolitan environment, where he studied with local artists and began to be recognized in local exhibitions by the age of twenty-eight in 1907. 1913 was a

breakout year for Malevich, earning a place in the prestigious Target exhibition in Moscow and designing costumes for the Futurist opera mentioned above. The next year he was exhibited in the Paris *Salon des Indépendants* before founding the Suprematism movement in 1915.



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The Suprematism movement, an evolution of Cubism, was based on the belief that abstract art could inspire viewers to access the spiritual plane. Using simple geometric shapes in a limited color palette, his works aimed to bring artworks closer to the level of non-objectivity he believed to constitute the base reality of the universe. By eliminating reference to real objects, viewers are invited to admire the



perfection of rational concepts and revel in the feelings that emanate from them. The movement was the first Russian-based avant-garde movement, marking a dramatic shift in the country's international perception.

After the October Revolution, Malevich was exalted as one of the country's finest modernists and was promoted to prestigious academic positions nationwide. Unfortunately, Josef Stalin proved less approving of modernist art than the preceding government under Lenin. Malevich was shortly censored by the Soviet government, which prevented him from creating new works by 1930 when he was arrested and accused of espionage. After a significant period of detention, he was released without charges before dying of cancer in 1935.

Kazimir S. Malevich,
“Victory Over the Sun,” portfolio

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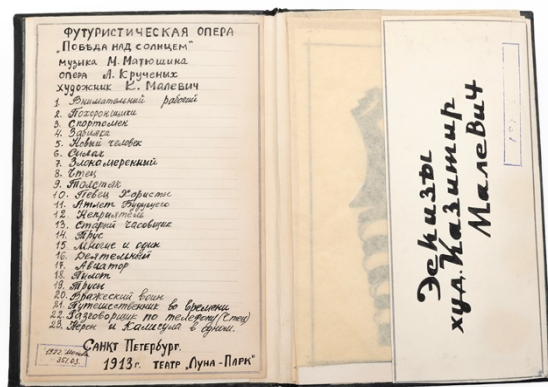
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was sold for \$12,300 in our Summer Fine Sale, held on Monday, June 17th. Our next sale will be Michaan's Auctions July Gallery Auction on Friday, July 19th. This sale features interesting and important pieces from the Furniture & Decorations Department, works from important artists brought to you by the Fine Art Department, and a collection of well-regarded pieces from the Jewelry Department. The auction is led by a pair of candelabras in the Rococo style by

French sculptor Claude Michel, a portfolio of woodcuts by the preeminent Surrealist Salvador Dali, and an impressive Rolex watch in black and gold.

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